**East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership**

**Family CC Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review: Partnership Response**

**October 2023**

The East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESCCP) commissioned this Local Safeguarding Practice Review following a serious incident involving the neglect of a large group of siblings. The review concluded that the parents were highly resistant to professional interventions to bring about change, resulting in a failure to intervene successfully to prevent the children experiencing significant harm. The lack of consensus in the multi-agency safeguarding team leading to the premature ending of the child protection plan, and the COVID-19 pandemic, meant that professionals had very limited contact with the children for over a year, during which time conditions in the home deteriorated significantly.

The report’s conclusions highlights the importance of all professionals focussing on ‘the lived experience of the child’ when assessing neglect, and in this case, the provision of home education failing to meet the social and emotional needs of the children. Appropriate assessment of fathers, limitations of recording systems and strengthening the safeguarding system through involvement with the voluntary sector also featured.

In view of these conclusions, the review has made various recommendations which have all been accepted by the ESSCP. In addition, the ESSCP has incorporated learning from other reviews where neglect was a factor, as well as the learning from a Rapid Review with similar features to Family CC. Actions in relation to the recommendations and learning from reviews include;

* A Pan-Sussex area Task & Finish group to review and refresh the neglect toolkit, matrix and training, in particular the co-existing factors of adolescence, elective home education, disability, equality and diversity, self-neglect and medical neglect. The updated neglect toolkit and updated training will launch by the end of 2023.
* The process of senior management review of all Child Protection plans that end at first review was put in place immediately after the review practitioner event, and has become accepted as on-going practice.
* An appreciative audit with regards to fathers/significant males/partners was undertaken in March 2023 and all partnership audits now include consideration on whether multi-agency safeguarding assessments have sufficient focus on fathers/significant males/partners.

As the Independent Chair and Safeguarding Leads of the ESSCP we would ask that when you read this report you consider how we can all prevent similar cases occurring, what part you can play in preventing the issues outlined and what steps you will take to improve safeguarding.

**Chris Robson, Independent Chair and Scrutineer, ESSCP**

**Naomi Ellis, Director of Safeguarding & Clinical Standards, NHS Sussex**

**Alison Jeffery, Director of Children’s Services, East Sussex County Council**

**Richard McDonagh, Detective Chief Superintendent, Head of Public Protection, Sussex Police**